

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-12 IO-13 TRSE-00 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 BIB-01 EB-08 DOE-15  
SOE-02 OES-07 NRC-05 /129 W  
-----008081 031518Z /42

R 031449Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7292  
INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
USMISSION USBERLIN  
USMISSION USNATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, GE  
SUBJECT: MAY DAY IN EAST BERLIN: CHILLED BOREDOM

1. DESPITE A COLD AND OVERCAST DAY A REPORTED 350,000  
WORKERS PARTICIPATED IN THE MAY DAY PARADE ON THE  
KARL-MARX-ALLEE. THE PARADE, WHICH PASSED IN REVIEW  
BEFORE MOST OF THE SED LEADERSHIP FOR FOUR FULL HOURS,  
WAS THE MOST DEMONSTRABLE ASPECT OF MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS  
WHICH SEEMED NOTABLE FOR THEIR LACK OF SPONTANEITY AND  
ENTHUSIASM.

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2. MOST OF THE PARADERS WERE WORKERS FROM VARIOUS EAST  
BERLIN AND EAST GERMAN FACTORIES, FIRMS AND ORGANIZATIONS  
WHO WERE ASSEMBLED FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF WALKING  
DOWN KARL-MARX ALLEE IN A MOSTLY DISORDERLY MASS CARRYING  
ASSORTED BANNERS AND PICTURES OF THE LEADERSHIP, OFTEN  
AT ANGLES MORE HORIZONTAL THAN VERTICAL. THE MASS OF

PARADERS WAS INTERSPERSED ON OCCASION BY GROUPS OF YOUTHFUL ATHLETES DOING MINIMAL ACROBATICS AND CHILEAN EXILES AND WAS CULMINATED BY MARCHING COLUMNS OF THE SO-CALLED KAMPFGRUPPEN, THE MIDDLE-AGED WORKERS MILITIA WHO WERE DISTINGUISHED FROM THE OTHER PARADERS BY THEIR DRAB UNIFORMS AND BY THEIR ABILITY TO MAINTAIN A SEMBLANCE OF RANKS AND FILES TO THE STRAINS OF THE "INTERNATIONALE" FOR THE SECOND YEAR NO UNITS OF THE VOLKSARMEE PARTICIPATED IN THE PARADE, ALTHOUGH ARMY TROOPS WERE USED FOR SECURITY AND CROWD CONTROL PURPOSES.

3. ALONG MUCH OF THE PARADE ROUTE SPECTATORS WERE NOTABLE FOR THEIR ALMOST COMPLETE ABSENCE. EVEN DIRECTLY ACROSS FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE REVIEWING STAND THE "CROWD" WAS ONLY TWO LINES DEEP AT BEST, NOT COUNTING THE LINE OF TROOPS AND POLICE. THE FEW HUNDRED SPECTATORS WHO MILLED AROUND THE END OF THE ALLEE APPEARED TO BE FOR THE MOST PART PARADERS THEMSELVES WHO HAD COMPLETED THEIR PART OF THE EXERCISE. THROUGHOUT THE FOUR HOURS OF THE PARADE, EMBASSY OFFICERS PRESENT DID NOT HEAR A SINGLE CHEER OR BURST OF APPLAUSE (EXCEPT FROM THE REVIEWING STAND ITSELF) NOR OBSERVE A SINGLE DEMONSTRATION OF ENTHUSIASM FROM EITHER PARADERS OR SPECTATORS. DESPITE REPEATED EXHORTATIONS OVER THE PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM, FEW IF ANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE MARCH SEEMED INTERESTED

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IN JOINING THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE IN THEIR CHANTS OF "HOCH, HOCH, HOCH" (A VARIATION ON THE MORE FAMILIAR "HEIL, HEIL, HEIL").

4. THE THIRD-OF-A-MILLION WORKERS DID SHOW CONSIDERABLE INTEREST, HOWEVER, IN THE ABUNDANCE OF FOOD AND ICE CREAM STANDS ALONG THE PARADE ROUTE AND DOTTING THE ALEXANDERPLATZ. MOST PARADERS WERE OBSERVED TO FURL THEIR FLAGS AND BANNERS DURING THE FINAL HUNDRED METERS OF THE MARCH AND THEN TO HEAD DIRECTLY TOWARDS THE FOOD. THE OCCASIONAL PRESENCE ON THE ALEX OF SEVERAL SCHOOL BANDS AND SOME FOLK MUSIC GROUPS (INCLUDING AT LEAST ONE OF THE SOVIET ARMY) ATTRACTED THE INTEREST OF THE CROWDS BUT DID NOT APPEAR TO GENERATE MUCH IN THE WAY OF ENTHUSIASM. A NUMBER OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS TOOK PLACE THROUGHOUT EAST BERLIN DURING THE AFTERNOON AND EVENING BUT ALL ACTIVITIES WERE OVER BY EIGHT THIRTY.

5. EMBASSY OFFICERS SAW NO PROVOCATIVE INCIDENTS OR OUTBREAKS OF VIOLENCE. ALTHOUGH POLICE AND ARMY TROOPS WERE MUCH IN EVIDENCE, IT DID NOT APPEAR THAT THE

SECURITY FORCES WERE TAKING UNDUE PRECAUTIONS FOR AN EVENT OF THIS SIZE. HOWEVER, IT WAS NOTICED THAT THE BEVERAGES BEING DISPENSED WERE ALMOST ALL NON-ALCOHOLIC, PERHAPS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FAMILY NATURE OF THE DAY, PERHAPS IN MEMORY OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF TOO MUCH DRINKING LAST OCTOBER 7 ON GDR NATIONAL DAY.

6. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL ASPECT OF THE MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS WAS THE SHORT SPEECH GIVEN BY POLITBURO MEMBER HARRY TISCH TO KICK OFF THE PARADE. HE PREDICTABLY STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF SOLIDARITY WITH OTHER SOCIALIST STATES AND PARTICULARLY WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND EMPHASIZED THE IMPOTANCE OF QUALITY

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-12 IO-13 TRSE-00 CIAE-00  
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PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 BIB-01 EB-08 DOE-15  
SOE-02 OES-07 NRC-05 /129 W  
-----008095 031519Z /42

R 031449Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7293  
INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
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AND EFFICIENCY IN PRODUCTION. HE STATED THE READINESS OF THE GDR TO ENGAGE IN "NORMAL RELATIONS" WITH THE FRG BUT DELIVERED A VEILED WARNING THAT THE STATIONING OF NEUTRON WEAPONS IN THE FRG COULD AFFECT THESE RELATIONS. (WE ASSUME THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS FULL

TEXT VIA FBIS.) BOLEN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, MAY DAY, HOLIDAYS, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 03 may 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978BERLIN03066  
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**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780188-0902  
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**Litigation History:**  
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**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Retention:** 0  
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**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
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**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** MAY DAY IN EAST BERLIN: CHILLED BOREDOM  
**TAGS:** PINT, GC  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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